



Feasibility study for the Southern African regional M and E facility. Some comments to the study and business plan

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Publication date:
2008

Document Version
Publisher's PDF, also known as Version of record

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Citation (APA):
Dieden, S. J. (Author). (2008). Feasibility study for the Southern African regional M and E facility. Some comments to the study and business plan. Sound/Visual production (digital)

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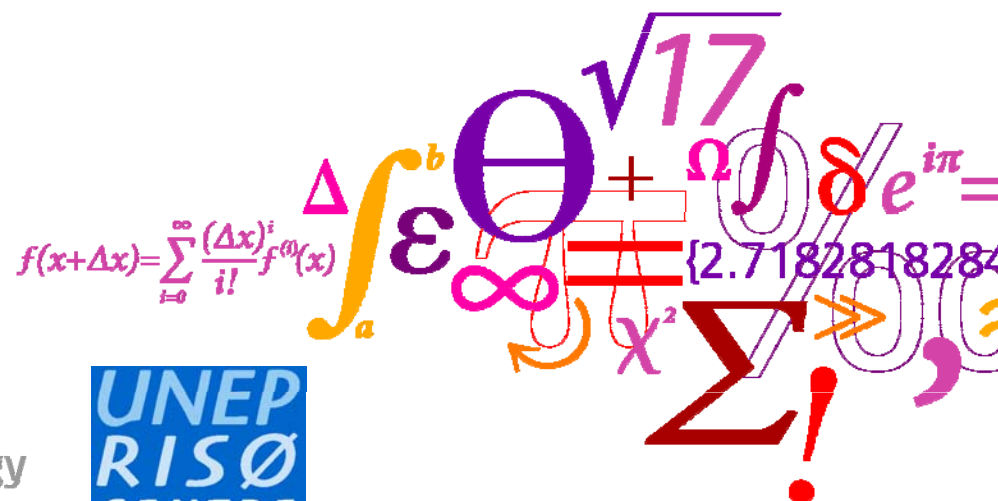
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Feasibility study for Regional M&E Facility in Southern Africa

Some comments to the study and business plan

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Initial comments

- Business plan for a not-for-profit organization - tremendously difficult to forecast income and expenditure streams, no comparable businesses in the region or elsewhere
- The M&EED facility business is to generate and sell three types of products
 - training and/or set-up of *in-house* M&EED
 - *external* evaluations
 - *information* accumulated from M&EED exercises
- Self-sufficiency
 - for sake of the facility's own survival
 - attract financiers
 - not least: quality assurance, to its potential clients

Overall impression

- Market definitely seems to exist for all three products:
 - training and/or set-up of in-house M&EED
 - external evaluations
 - information accumulated from M&EED exercises
 - The exact size of the market is difficult to assess
- ⇒ Start limited operation, in order to build network of expertise, in preparation for considerable growth

Four inter-related concerns – and a proposed remedy

1. Lack of M&EED specialists in the region
2. Attract stakeholders' = future clients' attention (create market)
3. Spend USD 84 000 p.a. to staff an office, from Day 1. CEO to lobby stakeholders, travel allowance of USD 70 000 (Year 1)
 - First two years: half the seed money goes into to this marketing activity.
 - Will there be sufficient administrative and/or coordination responsibilities to justify these expenditures?
4. Facility to sell info/ reports from past M&EED exercises

Concern 1: Lack of M&EED specialists in the region - the “facility” needs to build its own network of experts.

After the experts have been trained, what is their incentive to work for the facility rather than for themselves?

- “Membership fee” as a source of funding
 - The right to put a “GVEP International” stamp on their work, has to be a sign of high quality
 - In return the facility must also generate services for its members;
 - » find and supply M&EED assignments
 - » facilitate/assist applications for external funding
 - » provide exposure to a relevant audience/market

Concern 2: Attract attention of various regional stakeholder groups;

- SADC Secretariat Officials
 - Major development organizations
 - Ministries/Departments of Energy in SADC Member States
 - Energy Utilities,
 - Researchers
 - NGOs
 - Regional organizations
-
- Important: Identify and attract key individuals at the most conducive administrative level(s)
-
- Very difficult before the facility has any results to show!

Concern 3: Large funds spent on CEO for lobbying activities:

Uncertainty of starting a new business:

Interim solution:

Half time “coordinator” function – appoint permanent staff according to need. [Lobbying in later years (3-5?)]

Reallocate seed funding to **“Learning by doing” M&EED projects**

Purpose of "learning-by-doing" M&EED projects

- A) Identify a suitable bundle of projects and build specialist capacity through the M&EED of those projects – organize a sequence of collaborative workshops (along the lines of DEA)
- B) Organize designated regional stakeholder workshops
 - Create enthusiasm among stakeholders by share/exchanging results of the capacity-building M&E exercises = marketing! A good product promotes itself!
 - Special emphasis on: the implications from M&EED results to relevant stages of policy formulation and implementation.
- C) Piggy-back on other regional stakeholder meetings to present and disseminate M&EED – and create enthusiasm - results at different levels.

Point of regional cooperation

Share experiences and lessons learnt, in comparable or reasonably familiar settings, to improve future interventions.

- Concern 4: If the facility holds back reports/results/info from past M&E exercises for sale,
 - a) the regional synergies are reduced – exchange experiences improve interventions
 - b) a much smaller audience is reached
- Written reporting is not likely to be enough for dissemination

How fund capacity building exercises?

- free up seed funding by cutting back on permanent staff costs for the first two years. As an interim solution, share coordinating/administrative tasks between Wendy and Peter until permanent staff is needed?
- designated funds in projects to be used for learning-by-doing
- GTZ “partnership dialogue facility” for workshops?
- seed funding from other organizations (UNDP, UNEP, SADC?)

First steps towards learning-by-doing projects

- Assemble a catalogue of suitable projects in the region- preferably pairs or bundles of similar technologies, in different parts of the region.
- Agree on selection criteria for “learning-by-doing” projects.
- What are the projects’ existing budgets for M&EED?
- What scale of M&EED would be required for each project? Adjust scale to existing budgets.

Note on RETs and learning-by-doing projects

“Global Network on Energy for Sustainable Development” (GNESD)
analytical study on potential of RETs to provide energy services to the poor

- large potential
- main barrier to disseminate RETs:
 - Lack of policy attention and institutional framework for promotion of RETs
 - Low awareness both in policy institutions and among potential users.
- Given current global political focus on RETs and combatting CC: Explore sources of funding for such purposes to co-fund learning-by-doing RET projects?